

LOCAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FUNDS Application for Year 2002 Initiative

INITIATIVE TITLE: *Community Health Assessment Activities*

LHJ: Southwest Washington Health District

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Estimated 12-month Budget for Initiative (LCDF portion only): \$127,858

Public Health Standard Addressed:

- ☒ Protecting People from Disease or Injury
- ☒ Understanding Health Issues
- ☐ Assuring a Safe, Healthy Environment for People
- ☐ Promoting Healthy Living
- ☐ Helping People Get the Services They Need
- ☒ Other: All Public Health Standards for Washington State

Describe the Initiative: (in approximately 300 words or less; be clear and concise – this will be printed “as is” in the *PHIP in Action* publication)

The Assessment and Research Unit is in a unique position to provide technical expertise in the analysis of public health data (collected internally as well as from external sources) to community members, community partners and various units within the Southwest Washington Health District. Within this agency, we also have the capacity to work in partnership with various programs to enhance their ability to meet current public health standards through program evaluation and quality improvement methods. We also have the opportunity to use data collected by the other units in the Health District to generate a picture of the health status of our communities.

Given the vital importance of the communicable disease prevention responsibilities of the Southwest Washington Health District we will focus our efforts on enhancing the agency’s abilities to carry out these functions through program evaluation efforts. We will also work closely with these units to assure the collection and analysis of quality data in the furtherance of community health assessment and communicable disease prevention goals.

We anticipate our program evaluation efforts to reach beyond our own unit and the communicable disease units to the clinical services units of the Southwest Washington Health

District to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of family planning services to youth in this community.

In keeping with the role and goals of the Assessment and Research Unit we will focus on the following issues in the year 2002:

Initiative 1: Reinforcing the integration of communicable disease surveillance and health information systems within the Southwest Washington Health District.

Initiative 2: Program Evaluation activities within the Southwest Washington Health District

Initiative 3: Maintaining Community Health Assessment Capacity in Clark and Skamania Counties

The specific health issues for each of these initiatives and the proposed plans of action are outlined in appendices 1 through 3 attached to this document.

Quantitative/Qualitative Measures:

The long term and short-term measures of effectiveness for assessment activities around each of the initiatives enumerated above are outlined in appendices 1 through 3 attached to this document.

APPENDIX 1

INITIATIVE 1 – REINFORCING THE INTEGRATION OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASE SURVEILLANCE AND HEALTH INFORMATION SYSTEMS WITHIN THE SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON HEALTH DISTRICT

Currently, our capacity to manage the information on reportable conditions is limited. We store data in Epi-Info 6 databases and submit paper case reports to the Department of Health. Our ability to conduct analyses on aggregated reportable disease data is sub-optimal. We hope to enhance our data analysis capacities in this area.

The Southwest Washington Health District has been selected as a pilot site for the Public Health Issue Management System (PHIMS), a Department of Health web-based software system that allows streamlined communicable disease case management and reporting. Initially, PHIMS will have limited disease-reporting capabilities. The Assessment and Research unit's evaluation of the pilot PHIMS program will be valuable to its further development and refinement into the final product. Further, this program will serve as the repository of local aggregated data on communicable disease cases for purposes of analysis and surveillance.

With the introduction of PHIMS the role of the Assessment and Research Unit will be to assure this software program satisfies the requirements of this agency in terms of generating accurate aggregated data for regular and systematic analysis. Assessment and Research will be responsible for conducting the data analysis of PHIMS data in conjunction with the local Health Officer.

The Assessment and Research unit will assist the communicable disease units in meeting Washington State Public Health Standards. With this goal in mind, the Assessment and Research Unit has acquired training through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in maintaining effective and efficient surveillance systems. Knowledge of best practices in surveillance will allow the Assessment and Research unit to engage in program evaluation activities to strengthen the agency's ability to monitor health trends. In 2002, the Assessment and Research unit will use this training to integrate surveillance activities into the health information systems of this agency. This will allow the Assessment and Research unit to monitor local problems of public health importance to establish baseline data, monitor communicable disease trends, and track unusual health events. Surveillance data enables researchers to identify areas of interest for further investigation. Further, the Assessment and Research unit hopes to work under the guidance of the Health Officer to establish internal protocols for monitoring data that may be pertinent to bio-terrorism alert systems or emergency preparedness activities.

Rationale for the Initiative: (in approximately 300 words or less)

The impetus to strengthen our data management and data analysis capabilities in the area of communicable disease comes in multiple forms. First, this agency was selected as a pilot site for the testing of PHIMS. Second, we have already begun preparations to implement the Washington State Public Health Standards in the Southwest Washington Health District. In examining the standards related to communicable disease prevention we have found opportunities for improvement in our unit's ability to provide needed data analysis and program evaluation support for the communicable disease units.

Quantitative/Qualitative Measures: (How will you know you have been effective? This should be stated as a set of clear, measurable objectives.)

- Assessment Specialist will attend surveillance training to assess Southwest Washington Health District's communicable disease monitoring capacities and assure data quality.
- PHIMS testing will be initiated at Southwest Washington Health District. Assessment and Research staff will be trained in retrieving and analyzing communicable disease data from this new database.
- Assessment and Research staff will evaluate whether PHIMS meets the agency's data needs.

APPENDIX 2

INITIATIVE 2 – PROGRAM EVALUATION ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON HEALTH DISTRICT

As a part of the agency-wide quality improvement effort, the Assessment and Research Unit of the Southwest Washington Health District will provide leadership and technical expertise in the area of program evaluation. We anticipate that program evaluation efforts will motivate the implementation of a quality improvement plan.

The Standards for Public Health in Washington State have provided us with formal guidelines regarding the minimum requirements for sound public health practice. In order to implement these standards at the local level we will seek training and consultation with program evaluation experts. We intend to use the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Framework for Program Evaluation (Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, Vol. 48, No. RR-11, September 17, 1999) to guide this process.

Our initial efforts to implement program evaluation activities will focus on activities within the Assessment and Research unit, the Communicable Disease units, and Clinical Services units of the Southwest Washington Health District.

In the coming year we will examine our procedure for processing data obtained from Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System and the vital statistics data obtained from the Department of Health Center for Health Statistics. We will also evaluate our methods of disseminating our analyses of these data.

Many of the activities involving the communicable disease units have already been outlined in the preceding section (Initiative 1).

In the area of Clinical Services we hope to examine the family planning program. Recently, the Southwest Washington Health District entered into a partnership with Planned Parenthood to use grant funding from the Washington State Department of Health to address issues around teen pregnancy prevention in the southwest Washington area. A condition of the grant funding is the incorporation of a program evaluation component with general oversight from the Department of Health. The Assessment and Research unit anticipates taking on the role of managing the program evaluation process locally and acting as a liaison between this agency and Department of Health. This unit's activities will also extend to conducting a needs assessment of the local schools to identify those with the greatest need for reproductive health services.

Rationale for the Initiative: (in approximately 300 words or less)

Program evaluation components of all public health activities undertaken by this agency will ensure adherence to the Standards for Public Health in Washington State as well as other best practices.

Quantitative/Qualitative Measures: (How will you know you have been effective? This should be stated as a set of clear, measurable objectives.)

- Assessment and Research staff will attend trainings related to program evaluation
- We will invite consultants to provide customized training in program evaluation appropriate for the needs of the Southwest Washington Health District
- Assessment and Research staff will set up data collection systems and will analyze the information as required by the Family Planning Teen Pregnancy Prevention Project grant.
- Assessment and Research will provide annual teen pregnancy indicator data for Clark and Skamania counties as outcome measures of program effectiveness for the Family Planning Teen Pregnancy Prevention Project.
- Assessment and Research staff will assist with program descriptions and development of logic models for activities within the Assessment and Research, Communicable Disease, and Clinical Services units as a part of the overall program evaluation process outlined in the CDC framework.

APPENDIX 3

INITIATIVE 3 – MAINTAINING COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT CAPACITY IN CLARK AND SKAMANIA COUNTIES

In 2002, Clark County will conduct a local survey for the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. During this period, the Assessment and Research unit will plan and develop protocols for analyzing the data collected with this tool in order to produce a report on the health status of Clark and Skamania Counties in 2003.

We anticipate conducting a comprehensive community health assessment in 2003. In the coming year (2002) we will plan for this effort by researching methodologies, selecting indicators, identifying stakeholders and assuring resources. We will also research options for disseminating the data in ways that will maximize impact on policy.

During 2002 our assessment of risk and burden of disease in our community will continue. We will develop our ability to analyze vital statistics mortality data coded with the new ICD-10 system of coding. We will also explore how best to communicate to our constituents the impact of ICD-10 on health trends. The Assessment and Research unit expects to conduct analysis of cancer incidence data for Clark County in the coming year.

In addition to continuing our assessment activities as outlined above, the Assessment and Research unit will continue to enhance its capacity to conduct assessment using new and more informative tools. This may include the application of Geographic Information Systems software to public health issue analysis e.g. needs assessment, displaying incidence and prevalence data at the sub-county level.

Rationale for the Initiative: (in approximately 300 words or less)

Community health assessment is a mandated public health function. Although we have updated health indicators for our communities annually, our last comprehensive published report of our community was in 1998. The reports we plan to publish in the near future will help document some of the health trends and changes in health-related behaviors within this local health jurisdiction. We have had several requests for updated information from our community partners and members of the public in the form of a new comprehensive report.

Quantitative/Qualitative Measures: (How will you know you have been effective? This should be stated as a set of clear, measurable objectives.)

- BRFSS data collection will be completed by the end of 2002
- Assessment and Research Staff will develop a project plan for BRFSS data analysis for 2003
- Assessment and Research staff will develop a project plan for comprehensive community health reports for Clark and Skamania Counties
- Assessment and Research staff will produce a report examining cancer incidence in Clark County using Washington State Cancer Registry data.

- Assessment and Research staff will receive training in public health applications of GIS software
- Assessment and Research staff will receive training in the use of epidemiological data to inform policy.